

How much do you  
know about  
Mystery Fiction?

Activity 1

### I. Match these definitions with the genre of mystery fiction

1. *a detective story*
2. *a thriller*
3. *a mystery story*
4. *a spy and adventure story*

A. The main character is usually a man. He must fight against spies from some foreign power who try to steal weapons (missiles, bombs ...) or gold to rule the world.

B. It doesn't include a detective, but usually mystery and pursuit. It is often very frightening.

C. It has a detective as its central character. His object is to solve a crime and arrest a criminal. The reader sees everything in the eyes of the detective. To find the solution, you must be extremely logical and rational.

D. It has a central character who is not a detective. He or she is involved in mysterious adventures. The reader is often put into the hero's shoes.

## II. Say which genre these books belong to

### *A mind to murder*

Adam Dalgliesh is called in to investigate the murder of a woman found stabbed to death in a private clinic with a chisel. Whodunnit ? One of the nurses ? A doctor ? There are no witnesses, no clues ... apparently.

### *The Hound of the Baskervilles*

Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson investigate the murder of Sir Charles Baskerville who died after seeing a strange dog-like monster. Holmes tries to discover the truth behind this mysterious monster. He suspects Sir Charles's heir.

### *Moonraker*

Moonraker is a missile to stop all wars. But it threatens London. This is a job for James Bond 007 who saves millions of people with the help of a pretty young lady.

### *Jamaica Inn*

Mary Yellen goes to live with her aunt Patience and her uncle Joss in an inn in Jamaica. Her uncle drinks heavily and he is violent at times. Mary understands that her uncle is the leader of a gang of cruel men...

### *Murders in the rue Morgue*

When they entered the house in the rue Morgue at three o'clock in the morning, the policemen and the witnesses followed strange sounds to a room on the fourth floor which was locked on the inside. They found the body of Miss Camille D'Españaye up the chimney. Auguste Dupin tries to discover the truth.

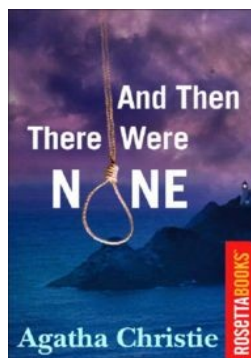
### *The strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

An extremely clever scientist, Dr Jekyll, makes an exciting discovery and decides to test it on himself- only to discover that it has disastrous side effects. He is transformed into a violent, murderous and hideous monster at night.

### III. Match the authors with the books and find the heroes

Ian Fleming / Edgar Allan Poe / Daphné Du Maurier / Sir Arthur Conan Doyle / P.D James / R.L Stevenson.

Authors	Titles	Hero (name or job)
	<u>The Hound of the Baskervilles</u>	
	<u>The Strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde</u>	
	<u>Murders in the rue Morgue</u>	
	<u>Moonraker</u>	
	<u>Jamaica Inn</u>	
	<u>A mind to murder</u>	



### Read the information and answer the following questions

**Title, genre :** And then there were none, a detective story.

**Author :** Agatha Christie

**Published in :** 1939

**The story :** The story takes place on an imaginary island off the Devon coast, called Indian Island. Nobody lives on Indian Island except a mysterious Mr Owen.

The story begins when Mr Owen invites ten people there for a few days- eight guests, a cook and a butler ... but on the first night, they are alone in his big house because Mr Owen can't come... After dinner, they can hear a voice saying : « You are charged with the following murders... ». The voice accuses them all, one by one, of murder ! They panick and try to leave the island but they can't because of a terrible storm...

## Part 1

- Questions :**
1. *Where does the scene take place ?*
  2. *Is it a desert island ? Why ?*
  3. *How many people are invited ?*
  4. *Does Mr Owen welcome them ? Why ?*
  5. *What are the guests accused of ?*
  6. *What are their reactions ?*
  7. *Can they run away ? Why ?*

## Part 2

Mrs Rogers, the cook, prepared a delicious meal and after dinner ... just imagine the scene... they were all feeling happy and contented. The ladies were chatting, William Blore was examining a statue on the table, General Macarthur was playing with his moustache, Philip Lombard was reading Punch Magazine, when suddenly... they heard a voice...

The voice accused them all, one by one, of murder ! Some screamed, some fainted, some stayed cool, but they were all petrified with fear !

Well ... an hour later, Mr Anthony Marston was drinking brandy when he dropped dead : there was poison in his drink ... and so there were only nine little Indians left ! Ten little Indians ... Nine little Indians ... The day after, a second little Indian died ... eight little Indians ... and then a third little Indian died, seven little Indians ... and one by one, they all died, and then there were none ! When the police arrived, all they found were ten bodies... and a mystery.



**Pupil A**

**I. Ask questions to your partner about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**

*Date of birth*

*Nationality*

*First job*

*First book (title and date)*

*His hero (name, job and nationality)*

*Different sorts of books he wrote*

*Journeys (countries he visited)*

*Cause and date of death*

**II. Then answer his /her questions about Agatha Christie**



**Agatha Christie** was born in England in a privileged family, in 1890. While her husband, Colonel Christie, was fighting during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War,

she worked in a hospital. There she learnt all the information about poisons and medicines that she used in her books.

In 1920 she published her first book, *the Mysterious Affair at Styles*, which was an immediate success. The hero, Hercule Poirot, is a funny little man from Belgium. He is a retired policeman. Contrary to Sherlock Holmes, Poirot doesn't walk around with a magnifying glass, looking for prints or cigarette butts. He just sits in his armchair, setting his « little grey cells » to work.

Later on Agatha Christie invented another character called Miss Marple. She isn't a professional detective, but a sweet old lady who lives in a small village in the country.

After her divorce Agatha Christie remarried in 1930 and with her second husband, an archaeologist, she travelled a lot, particularly to Egypt, Syria and Irak. That's why several of her books have exotic titles like *Death on the Nile* or *Murder on the Orient Express*.

She wrote 78 crime novels, 150 short stories, 19 plays. One of her plays, *the Mousetrap*, was first performed in November 1952 and is still on in London- a world record ! A film was made about her life, a few years after she died in 1976.



B

I. Ask questions to your partner about Agatha Christie

*Date of birth*

*Nationality*

*Family*

*First book (title and date)*

*Her first hero (name, job and nationality)*

*Her second hero (name, characteristics)*

*Journeys (countries she visited)*

*Different sorts of books she wrote*

*Date of death*

II. Then answer his /her questions about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle



**Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** was born in Edinburgh in 1859. He was educated at home until the age of 9. Then he was sent to a religious school and later studied medicine. In 1882 he opened a medical practise in Portsmouth. In 1887 he published *A Study in Scarlet*, the novel in which Sherlock Holmes appeared for the first time. The clever English detective soon became popular and Conan Doyle wrote many more of his adventures in lots of short stories and three novels : *The Valley of Fear*, *The Sign of Four* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

He also wrote a series of science fiction stories whose hero was called Professor Challenger.

Conan Doyle had an adventurous life : he travelled to Arctic and he ran a hospital in South Africa. Then he was a war correspondent during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War.

After his wife's death he became interested in spiritualism. He died of a heart attack in July 1930.

